

STARS AND STRIPES®

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A news digest for U.S. forces serving overseas

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Irma's aftermath dangerous for elderly

Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. — Six patients at a sweltering Hollywood nursing home died in Hurricane Irma's aftermath, authorities said Wednesday, as people confronted a multitude of new hazards in the storm's wake, including oppressive heat, brush-clearing accidents and lethal fumes from generators.

Hollywood Police Chief Tom Sanchez said investigators believe the deaths at the Rehabilitation Center at Hollywood Hills were heat-related, and added: "The building has been sealed off and we are conducting a criminal investigation." He did not elaborate.

Three patients were found dead at the nursing home early Wednesday, and three more died at the hospital after a total of more than 100 were evacuated, authorities said.

The air conditioning was out, but Sanchez said it remained under investigation whether power was entirely cut. He didn't answer questions regarding whether a generator was running inside the place.

Also in the Miami area, a Coral Gables apartment building was evacuated after authorities determined a lack of power made it unsafe for elderly tenants, while officers arrived at the huge Century Village retirement community in Pembroke Pines to help people on upper floors without access to working elevators.

In addition, at least five people died and more than a dozen were treated after breathing carbon monoxide fumes from generators in the Orlando, Miami and Daytona Beach areas. Not counting the nursing home deaths, at least 13 people in Florida have died in Irma-related circumstances, many of them well after the storm had passed. A Tampa man died

GI presence growing in affected areas

BY COREY DICKSTEIN

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — The Pentagon has mobilized nearly 30,000 military personnel for recovery operations along Hurricane Irma's devastating path from the U.S. Virgin Islands up to the eastern mainland, where it carried tropical storm-strength winds north of Atlanta, defense officials said Wednesday.

By Wednesday, the bulk of the military response, some 19,000 troops, were focused on Florida, where they were conducting road clearance, supply delivery and search and rescue operations throughout the entire state, according to Pentagon and Florida National Guard spokesmen. Additional troops could be called into the state in the coming days, they said.

Some 8,000 members of Florida's Army and Air National Guard were leading the military response, which officials said could last several weeks as they have in the wake of Hurricane Harvey. Thousands of National Guard troops remain on the ground assisting with relief operations nearly three weeks after that Category 4 storm struck Texas' coast Aug. 25.

"The next days and weeks will no doubt be trying and exhausting as we begin to rebuild," said Army Maj. Gen. Michael Calhoun, the top Guard officer in Florida. "But no matter what this storm has brought, know that you are not alone."

In addition to search and rescue and route clearance missions, Guard members in Florida were assisting at more than 250 temporary shelters set up throughout the state. In Georgia, 1,100 National Guard members were on duty conducting similar operations, said De-

siree Bamba, a Guard spokeswoman.

Five Navy warships full of sailors and Marines were positioned Wednesday off the coast of Florida, primarily to provide aid to the Keys. The ships, carrying dozens of helicopters and tilt-rotor aircraft, were prepared to provide aid wherever they were needed within Florida, according to the Navy. On Tuesday, Marines and sailors operating off those ships delivered more than 52,000 pounds of supplies and equipment to Key West. They were continuing those operations Wednesday, according to a statement from the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Nearly a week after Irma passed through the U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico on Sept. 7 as a devastating Category 5 storm, nearly 10,000 U.S. troops were continuing to provide relief operations there, primarily from several Navy ships positioned around the U.S. territory in the Caribbean Sea.

Marine and Navy helicopters from the USS Kearsarge, an amphibious assault ship, and the USS Oak Hill, a dock landing ship, were evacuating people from St. Thomas to St. Croix and delivering supplies to other islands in the American territory, according to a statement from U.S. Northern Command. Marines and National Guard members were conducting road clearance and distributing supplies.

The USS Wasp, an amphibious assault ship, and the USS McLean, a cargo ship, were also conducting relief efforts on the islands, according to the Northern Command statement.

Military personnel have rescued or evacuated more than 1,600 people from hard-hit islands in the American chain, according to the Pentagon.

after the chainsaw he was using to remove branches kicked back and cut his carotid artery. Elsewhere, Irma has been blamed for four deaths in South Carolina and two in Georgia. At least 37 people were killed in the Caribbean.

In the battered Florida Keys, meanwhile, county officials

pushed back against a preliminary estimate from the Federal Emergency Management Agency that 25 percent of all homes in the Keys were destroyed and nearly all the rest were heavily damaged.

"Things look real damaged from the air, but when you clear the trees and all the debris, it's

not much damage to the houses," said Monroe County Commissioner Heather Carruthers.

The Keys felt Irma's full fury when the hurricane roared in on Sunday with 130 mph winds. But the extent of the damage has been an unanswered question for days because some places have been unreachable.

No fast fix for Navy's manning issues

BY TYLER HLAVAC

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — There's no quick fix for manning issues that may have contributed to recent deadly collisions at sea, the Navy's top enlisted sailor said at an all-hands meeting at Yokosuka on Wednesday.

More ships overseas and smaller crews mean overworked sailors who can't complete maintenance on time and potential safety issues, the Government Accountability Office told a hearing last week into the collisions involving the USS Fitzgerald and USS John S. McCain that cost 17 sailors their lives.

"Manning is one of those things we need to get fixed im-

mediately," Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Steven Giordano told sailors gathered at Yokosuka. "We need the right people on board at the appropriate pay grade. We don't want you out there operating with reduced manning at a level that has you working 100-hour plus weeks."

One of the sailors at the meeting, Petty Officer 2nd Class Akram Omar, a boatswain's mate with port operations, said his unit is one of many facing personnel shortfalls.

"What is the Navy doing for us on shore side for manning, training and maintenance?" Omar asked. "Based off a 2015 model, we are 20 personnel short. We're out there with the fleet when they're underway.

What is the Navy doing for the shore side?"

Giordano responded that manning is an issue across the Navy and that the service has been pulling sailors from shore units to try to fill manning gaps on ships. But he doesn't see the issues being resolved soon.

"Manning is affecting every part of our Navy," he said. "It's not just here at 7th Fleet, it's not just at sea, it's not just at shore. We just don't have the inventory right now to get that manning level where it should be at across all spectrums, at sea and at shore."

Rear Adm. Richard Brown, head of the Navy Personnel Command and deputy chief of Naval Personnel, told Stars and Stripes last summer the Navy

would consider giving 7th Fleet a higher priority when it comes to manning.

"They are always on deployment," he said. "We want to make sure that we have the priorities set correctly."

The Navy announced last month it would begin shifting more than 1,100 senior enlisted sailors from shore billets to fill about 3,000 "gaps" in operations at sea.

The service is trying to add new sailors and retain those already enlisted, allowing some to stay in uniform longer without being promoted. The Navy's budget for the 2018 fiscal year aims to add 4,000 sailors, bringing its roll up to 327,900.

Amid N. Korea crisis, Mattis focuses on nukes

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — As North Korea flaunts its new nuclear muscle, Defense Secretary Jim Mattis is spotlighting the overwhelming numerical superiority of America's doomsday arsenal.

On Wednesday he dropped in on ground zero of American nuclear firepower: Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota, home to more than 100 land-based nuclear missiles as well as nuclear bomb-toting aircraft. He also will receive briefings at Strategic Command, whose top officer would command nuclear forces in war.

The visits were scheduled before a recent series of North Korean nuclear and missile tests, but they give Mattis a chance to highlight what the Air Force touts as an always-ready fleet of land-based missiles and B-52 bombers equipped to deliver nuclear devastation to nearly any point on the globe in short order.

Minot and Strategic Command headquarters at Offutt Air Force Base in Nebraska

also are timely backdrops for a related political message: The Trump administration intends to press ahead with a multi-billion-dollar modernization of the entire nuclear arsenal. The Pentagon is in the midst of an in-depth review of nuclear weapons policy, but it seems already clear that upgrading the Cold War-era nuclear force is a foregone conclusion.

Last month the Pentagon signaled its intentions by awarding two key contracts. One was to Northrop Grumman and Boeing, totaling nearly \$700 million, for further development of an intercontinental ballistic missile, or ICBM, to replace the Minuteman 3. The other was to Lockheed Martin and Raytheon for \$1.8 billion to work on a new nuclear-armed, air-launched cruise missile. The Air Force also is proceeding with development of a next-generation nuclear-capable bomber, dubbed the B-21 Raider, and the Navy is building a new fleet of strategic nuclear submarines.

How this fits into the broader defense budget in coming years is unclear. Kingston Reif,

a nuclear policy specialist at the Arms Control Association, said his analysis of budget figures suggests that the total cost over 30 years could approach \$1.5 trillion, when adjusting for inflation.

"The current approach exceeds what is necessary for deterrence and assumes that the United States will maintain a nuclear arsenal like the one it has now for decades to come," Reif said, noting the Obama administration had determined that the nuclear arsenal could be cut further without sacrificing security.

Mattis in recent weeks has all but dismissed the idea — he himself raised it in congressional testimony two years ago — that the country might be better off eliminating the ICBM fleet. In June, the Air Force finished reducing the number of Minuteman 3 missiles by 50 to a total of 400, the lowest since 1962. But Mattis appears to have been persuaded by the argument that keeping ICBMs deployed in underground silos sprinkled across the western Great Plains is key to deterrence because an

attacker would have to use hundreds of weapons to destroy all 400 launch facilities.

"It's going to soak up a lot" of an enemy's arsenal, he said last month, referring to the Minuteman launch sites in North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Nebraska. Because these are fixed sites known to an adversary, they are easily targeted, although perhaps not easily destroyed.

Minot hosts the 91st Missile Wing, which operates one-third of the nation's 400 Minuteman 3 missiles, as well as the 5th Bomb Wing, which flies nuclear-capable B-52 bombers.

On a visit last month to Naval Base Kitsap at Bangor, Wash., which is home to Pacific-based Trident nuclear submarines, Mattis repeated the familiar assertion that the Pentagon's No. 1 priority is to maintain a nuclear force sufficient to ensure that the weapons are never needed in combat, adding darkly, "If they are, that fight is over with very, very quickly, as we try to restore some kind of health to this planet."

Marine officer focuses on run across US

BY WYATT OLSON

Stars and Stripes

After 10 years of early mornings, grueling physical training and mission intensity in the Marine Corps, Capt. Maggie Seymour left the service in August for ... early mornings, grueling PT and mission intensity.

While on terminal leave, Seymour took off from San Diego on July 22 on a fundraising run across America, a journey she has dubbed "One Marine. Coast to Coast. 100 Days."

She averages 35 miles in eight to 10 hours a day — or a night, in areas where the sun becomes too unbearable.

She expects to reach her finish line in Virginia Beach in late October. As of mid-September, she was east of Oklahoma City. Her progress can be live-tracked at <http://bit.ly/2xgYi5B>

"Success for me will be if I can make it across the country, and if I can get people involved," Seymour said when Stars and Stripes caught up with her via cellphone while she was in Arizona.

"That's the mission to get people involved in their communities. I think that's what our country really needs, is people involved and responsible, reaching out to other people. I think that's the answer to a lot of problems."

Through the run, she is seeking donations for the "communities" she has come to cherish: Team Hoyt, Ainsley's Angels, Warrior Expeditions, Wear Blue, Mission Continues and Farmer Veteran Coalition. The organizations primarily support special-needs athletes and veterans.

"The communities I've chosen have given a lot to me, but you can get that from any community," she said.

The 31-year-old is a gonzo marathoner.

In February 2016, she ran 161 miles over four days along the coast of California, a tribute to the 161 servicewomen who have died supporting U.S. military operations since 9/11, she said.

Corey Hanrahan, president of Team Hoyt's San Diego chapter, recalled a friend introducing him to Seymour in Massachusetts several years ago.

"She just got done running six marathons in six days," he said. "And there she was holding a pint. I was like, 'OK!'"

They became closer friends after she was stationed in San Diego a few years ago.

"Maggie is one of these humble people who is capable of doing incredible things — and she does incredible things — and you would never know it."

Seymour's goal of reaching Virginia Beach by Oct. 28 is driven by her desire to join the annual Wicked 10-kilometer race there that week.

It was at that race six years ago she first ran with Team Hoyt, an organization that sprang from the feats of father-son team Dick and Rick Hoyt. Son Rick, now 51, is quadriplegic and has cerebral palsy, but since he was a teenager his father has wheeled him in hundreds of marathons.

Seymour's inspiration for the nationwide run was Anna Judd, who ran from Los Angeles to New York City in 2014. Seymour talked to Judd shortly before beginning the run. "She told me to not really expect anything, to be open to whatever happens," she

said.

It didn't take long for the unanticipated to arrive.

"I didn't expect I'd have to start running at night until I got to Arizona, but I had to start on day three because the temperatures were so hot and because there was so much climbing on the eastern part of the California desert," Seymour said. "That was an adjustment."

Running at night is a challenge, and not only because it messes up her sleep cycle.

"It's weird because on the one hand it's boring," she said. "There's nothing to look at. On the other hand you can't really relax and let go. You're looking at where you're running and watching out for snakes, where the trail's going, stopping to check your map, trying not to trip over any rocks. It's kind of the worst of both those worlds."

Seymour paused. "And if I were to be completely honest, I'm scared of the dark," she said.

Accompanying her is a support van, driven by a rotating crew of friends. It leapfrogs ahead of her route, supplying her with food and water at needed intervals. They camp or stay at hotels along the way.

Her cross-country route runs through the Midwest, but Seymour said she had to make "a hard decision" early on to drop plans to detour north to her hometown in Alexander, Ill., where she lived in a rural home until heading to college.

The visit would have added too many extra days, she said. "We're practical people in the Midwest," she said, jokingly. "So practicality over sentimentality."

Senate mulls increases in troops' pay, ships, aircraft

BY CLAUDIA GRISALES

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Pay raises for servicemembers, funds for new ships and aircraft, as well as a boost to missile defense, could be implemented if the Senate's proposed \$700 billion defense bill is approved in the coming days.

Lawmakers are slated to consider hundreds of potential amendments to the massive spending plan, such as protecting transgender servicemembers.

Some of those amendments could set up a few battles on the Senate floor, though some lawmakers contend the overall proposal is in strong shape to gain

approval.

"It looks pretty good," Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn, R-Texas, said Monday night of the bill's outlook. It could get moved through "this week or early next week."

The Senate's version of the National Defense Authorization Act was stalled during the summer, but passed a procedural hurdle Monday night. The effort set up debate on the bill as early as Wednesday.

There's plenty of discussion that could be considered. Among the amendments, there's a bipartisan proposal by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., and Sen. Susan Collins, R-Maine, to prevent a military transgender ban.

Already, the defense bill underwent a series of setbacks earlier this year, and it wasn't clear whether Senate members would get the chance to tackle the proposal this month.

However, a surprise deal reached between President Donald Trump and leading Democrats opened up a tight September originally focused on looming and critical deadlines.

The deal, signed by Trump on Friday, approved a \$15 billion aid package for Hurricane Harvey and extended federal funding and the debt ceiling for at least three more months, pushing a more long-term plan to December.

A new round of funding was

needed for the 2018 budget, which starts Oct. 1.

Now lawmakers say they are ready to tackle the defense bill. The effort was delayed in July when one of the bill's major architects, Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., was diagnosed with brain cancer and underwent surgery.

On Tuesday, his office said he would continue to seek treatment at a Bethesda, Md., hospital as he maintains his regular Senate duties.

McCain, chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has said the NDAA is critical because it addresses the issue of rebuilding the military after years of budget cuts.

Justices allow Trump ban on most refugees

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Supreme Court is allowing the Trump administration to maintain its restrictive policy on refugees.

The justices on Tuesday agreed to an administration request to block a lower court ruling that would have eased the refugee ban and allowed up to 24,000 refugees to enter the country before the end of October.

The order was not the court's last word on the travel policy that President Donald Trump first rolled out in January. The justices are scheduled to hear arguments on Oct. 10 on the legality of the bans on travelers

from six mostly Muslim countries and refugees anywhere in the world.

It's unclear, though, what will be left for the court to decide. The 90-day travel ban lapses in late September and the 120-day refugee ban will expire a month later.

White House spokeswoman Sarah Huckabee Sanders said Tuesday night: "We are pleased that the Supreme Court has allowed key components of the order to remain in effect. We will continue to vigorously defend the order leading up to next month's oral argument in the Supreme Court."

The administration has yet to say whether it will seek to renew the bans, make them

permanent or expand the travel ban to other countries.

Lower courts have ruled that the bans violate the Constitution and federal immigration law. The high court has agreed to review those rulings. Its intervention so far has been to evaluate what parts of the policy can take effect in the meantime.

The justices said in June that the administration could not enforce the bans against people who have a "bona fide" relationship with people or entities in the U.S. The justices declined to define the required relationships more precisely.

A panel of the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a district

judge's order that would have allowed refugees to enter the U.S. if a resettlement agency in the U.S. had agreed to take them in. The administration objected, saying the relationship between refugees and resettlement agencies shouldn't count. The high court's unsigned order agreed with the administration, at least for now.

The appeals court also upheld another part of the judge's ruling that applies to the ban on visitors from Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria and Yemen. Grandparents and cousins of people already in the U.S. can't be excluded from the country under the travel ban, as the Trump administration had wanted.

Caudle takes over Pacific submarines

Stars and Stripes

Rear Adm. Daryl Caudle has assumed command of all Navy submarines in the Pacific.

Caudle replaced Rear Adm. Frederick "Fritz" Roegge as commander of Pacific Fleet's Submarine Force during a change-of-command ceremony Monday at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii. Roegge is heading to Washington, D.C., to serve as the president of National Defense University.

Caudle is a former commander of the Pearl Harbor-based Submarine Squadron 3. His previous assignment was at 6th Fleet, where he led Submarine Group 8 and served as deputy commander, director of operations for Naval Forces Europe-Africa.

The Pacific submarine force provides anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface ship warfare, precision land strike, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance and early warning and special warfare capabilities to the Pacific Command and deterrence capabilities to U.S. Strategic Command, a Navy statement said.

'Fatberg' clogging a sewer in London is 2-football-fields long and weighs 130 tons

The Washington Post

Talk about dirty jobs.

Crews in London are waging a "three-week sewer war" against an enormous "fatberg" — a solid mass of congealed oil, diapers, hand wipes and other unsavory items — that is clogging a Victorian-era sewer in Whitechapel, according to a news release from British utilities company Thames Water.

It's more than 250 yards long — longer than two football fields. And it weighs 130 tons, more than 10 average buses. And it's solid as a rock.

A crew of eight people is attempting to break up the mass using high-powered jet hoses. After it's in pieces, they'll suction it into tankers and bring it to a nearby recycling plant for disposal.

The process is expected to take three weeks.

"It's basically like trying to break up concrete," Thames Water's head of waste networks, Matt Rimmer, said in a news release.

The fatbergs form when people dispose of cooking oil and other fats through their sinks and toilets. When the oil gets into the sewer, it often congeals with other waste that isn't meant to be flushed, such as diapers or wet wipes.

"It's frustrating as these situations are totally avoidable and caused by fat, oil and grease being washed down sinks and wipes flushed down the loo," Rimmer added.

While not uncommon, the size of this particular fatberg is stunning, perhaps even record-breaking.

"This fatberg is up there with the biggest we've ever seen," Rimmer said in a news release. "It's

a total monster and taking a lot of manpower and machinery to remove as it's set hard."

These masses form in most major cities — in New York, for example, clearing out such blockages cost an estimated \$4.65 million in 2013 — but they seem to be particularly problematic in London.

In 2015, for example, a 10-ton fatberg broke a section of the London sewer, requiring Thames Water to replace nearly 100 feet of piping, as The Washington Post's Sarah Kaplan reported. At the time, Thames Water repair and maintenance supervisor Stephen Hunt told the Guardian, "We see blockages all the time on household sewer pipes, which are about big enough for a cricket ball to pass through, but to have this much damage on a sewer almost a meter in diameter is mind-boggling."

If only he had known what the city was in for a few years later.

The problem is so insidious in London, in fact, Thames Water "even formed a 'fatberg hit squad' to tackle the problem," as Kaplan wrote.

Of course, given that they would rather not deploy this special team, Rimmer urged everyone to be cautious when it comes to flushing.

"When it comes to preventing fatbergs, everyone has a role to play," he said. "Yes a lot of the fat comes from food outlets but the wipes and sanitary items are far more likely to be from domestic properties. The sewers are not an abyss for household rubbish."

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Couple get probation for 'pranks' on kids

MD FREDERICK — A husband and wife who posted controversial "prank" videos of themselves berating their children have been sentenced to five years of probation.

The Baltimore Sun reported Monday that Heather and Mike Martin each entered Alford pleas to two counts of child neglect. The pleas allow them to maintain their innocence while acknowledging the evidence.

The Maryland couple uploaded videos to their "DaddyOfFive" YouTube channel. In them, the parents screamed profanities at their children and broke their toys. They later apologized.

The investigation focused on two biological children of Michael Martin and the stepchildren of Heather Martin.

The probation precludes the Martins from contact with those children or their biological mother unless permitted by a court.

Girl, 13, takes SUV, found 700 miles away

MS CORINTH — Police in one Mississippi town are trying to figure out what to do about a 13-year-old girl who took an SUV and drove to Ohio.

Corinth authorities told WTVA-TV that the girl was found safe in Akron, nearly 700 miles away. The Dodge Caliber SUV was also recovered.

However, the girl now faces charges in Ohio and a pending motor vehicle theft charge in Corinth.

Investigators say they will have to consult with youth court to determine how the case will be handled.

The girl is from Ohio but had been staying with family mem-

bers in the northeast Mississippi town.

Police called to get gator out from under truck

AL TUSCALOOSA — It wasn't the typical traffic call for police in the Alabama city of Tuscaloosa.

Police were dispatched to a local business where a truck driver reported that an alligator had crawled underneath his 18-wheeler.

Police told Alabama news outlets that the gator measured nearly 8 feet long.

Employees from the Tuscaloosa Police Department's Traffic Division and Tuscaloosa Department of Transportation's Animal Control were among those who captured the alligator.

It was turned over to Alabama Game and Fish to be released back into its natural habitat.

Man accused of trying on shirts in break-in

MO BOURBON — An eastern Missouri man is accused of breaking into a home, carrying a mop around during the burglary, and trying on the resident's shirts before leaping through a glass window to escape.

KMOV-TV reported that Kaleb Douglas, 26, is charged with first-degree burglary and third-degree assault.

The break-in occurred Aug. 31 in Bourbon, Mo. Police Chief Paul Satterfield said Douglas was first suspected of throwing rocks at cars on Interstate 44 from a highway overpass. When deputies arrived, the suspect ran into the woods.

Later, a resident reported a man in his home carrying a mop, and trying on his shirts. Douglas allegedly kicked the resident in the hand, dislocat-

ing a finger.

Satterfield said that when officers arrived, the suspect jumped from a coffee table through a double-pane window.

Caution urged after fake money dumped on road

MO JEFFERSON CITY — Authorities said motorists in Jefferson City created a traffic hazard over the weekend when they began snatching up fake \$100 bills that had been dumped onto a road.

Jefferson City police said in a news release that officers responded Sunday morning after the counterfeit money was discarded on a road. Police say the bills have identical serial numbers and pink Asian script on the front.

The release didn't say what led up to the counterfeit money being dumped on the road. Businesses are urged to be cautious and not accept the fake money.

City revisits permit for pumpkin festival

NH KEENE — Officials in New Hampshire are holding up a permit for Keene's annual pumpkin festival amid concerns that the city could see a repeat of violent riots that broke out in 2014.

Organizers of the Keene Pumpkin Festival are planning for a smaller festival this year — one that would include area school children. New Hampshire Public Radio reported the city council voted to revisit the permit Thursday after they discovered social media posts promising widespread parties.

City Councilor Terry Clark says the council received letters from the Keene State College president, the city fire chief and police chief that all warned of potential trouble.

The council will take up the issue on Wednesday, and are planning a full vote later this month.

Police: Drunken driver plows into bike tour

NY NEW YORK — Police say a woman is in critical condition after a drunken driver plowed into a group of cyclists participating in a biking event in New York City.

Three bicyclists were injured during the Sunday NYC Century Bike Tour in Brooklyn. Police say the 39-year-old driver of the van was arrested and charged with vehicular assault, driving without a license and driving while impaired.

Police said the man was intoxicated when he drove into the crowd of bicyclists, who were stopped at a red light.

Couple helps maintain shamed residents' yards

OH NILES — An Ohio couple stepped forward to help families shamed online for their unkempt yards.

The Warren Tribune Chronicle reported Adam Jenyk and his wife, Chaelsie Adkins, saw an opportunity to help their neighbors in Niles after viewing hurtful posts on community pages. Volunteers have joined the couple's small-town mission.

Adkins cautions cyber bullies who are unaware of the personal lives of people they try to shame. She says she and her husband have helped a disabled veteran, a stroke victim and a family caring for a special needs child.

Jenyk and Adkins' work has garnered the attention and support of Niles Mayor Tom Scarnecchia. Jenyk says doing something to help makes more sense than complaining.

From wire reports

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Indians' winning streak reaches 20

Associated Press

CLEVELAND — The Cleveland Indians share a record with a team celebrated by Hollywood.

“Moneyball” has its sequel.

Following a familiar script of scoring first, playing strong defense and riding dominant pitching, the Indians extended their winning streak to 20 games and matched the AL mark held by the 2002 Oakland Athletics, beating the Detroit Tigers 2-0 on Tuesday night.

Cleveland's streak, which began on Aug. 24 in Boston, is tied for the majors' second-longest in 82 years — and the Indians show no signs of stopping.

Corey Kluber (16-4) strengthened his Cy Young Award case with a four-hitter as Cleveland joined the 2002 A's, 1935 Chicago Cubs (21) and 1916 New York Giants (26) as the only teams to win at least 20 in a row.

Francisco Lindor homered leading off the first inning

against Matthew Boyd (5-10), and the crowd of 24,654 stood and roared when Kluber sprinted to the mound for the ninth.

Second baseman Jose Ramirez made a sensational diving stop in short right field to throw out Ian Kinsler for the second out, and after allowing a double to Alex Presley, Kluber sealed win No. 20 — and Cleveland's seventh shutout during the streak — by getting Miguel Cabrera on an easy grounder to third.

Fireworks exploded overhead and the Indians lined up to celebrate yet another win.

The Giants' revered 101-year-old streak includes a tie that interrupted 12- and 14-game unbeaten runs. However, the Elias Sports Bureau, the official statistical custodian for Major League Baseball, has always regarded the Giants' stretch as the top mark because tie games were replayed from the start back then.

Cleveland can equal the Cubs' 21-game run Wednesday afternoon, and the Indians are within striking distance of the illustrious-but-imperfect mark of those '16 Giants.

The Indians and A's, whose unexpected run to the postseason 15 years ago was re-told in the film starring Brad Pitt, don't have much in common besides their 20-game streaks.

Oakland was an overachieving squad loaded with pitching and a roster comprised of low-salaried players assembled by a front office that forced baseball to rethink how it evaluated talent. The Indians, on the other hand, have spent millions to get better, and have been expected to win — big.

Maybe not at this amazing rate, but after getting to Game 7 in 2016, Cleveland was a favorite to return to the World Series.

Closing in on their second consecutive AL Central title,

the Indians figured to keep things going with Kluber on the mound, and the right-hander didn't disappoint.

Kluber improved to 8-1 in his last nine starts and lowered his ERA to an AL-best 2.45 with his third shutout of the season and fifth complete game. He allowed a lead-off double in the first to Kinsler, but stranded him at third by striking out Cabrera and Nicholas Castellanos to end the inning.

While understanding the fascination with his team's roll, Indians manager Terry Francona has been downplaying the streak so as not to make it a distraction. As far as Francona's concerned, there is nothing magical going on.

“I just want to win tonight. I've always felt like that,” he said before the game. “Maybe you don't believe me. I want us to show up every day and play the best game we can. We're going to lose a game.”

MLB roundup

Twins hit record seven home runs in rout of Padres

Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS — Brian Dozier served notice last season when he hit 42 home runs. Miguel Sano showed his power this year at the All-Star Home Run Derby.

The rest of the Minnesota Twins are showing they can hit the ball over the fence as well.

Jason Castro homered twice, Dozier was a double from the cycle and Minnesota pounded the San Diego Padres 16-0 on Tuesday night.

The Twins hit a season-high seven home runs, setting a Target Field record for most homers in a game, to back another strong start from Kyle Gibson (10-10). According to the Elias Sports Bureau, the Twins set a major league record by homering in each of the first seven innings with Jorge Polanco, Eddie Rosario, Eduardo Escobar and Kennys Vargas adding to the total.

Dodgers 5, Giants 3: Clayton Kershaw pitched his team to its first win in nearly two weeks, helping visiting Los Angeles clinch a playoff berth by beating San Francisco to snap an 11-game losing streak that was the club's worst since moving to the West Coast in 1958.

Brewers 5, Pirates 2: Eric Thames hit his 29th home run, Domingo Santana went 3-for-4 with two RBIs and host Milwaukee beat Pittsburgh.

Red Sox 11, Athletics 1: Mookie Betts hit two home runs and a two-run triple, and host Boston rolled past Oakland.

Braves 8, Nationals 0: Freddie Freeman hit a three-run home run off Gio Gonzalez and Julio Teheran threw seven shutout innings as Atlanta cruised past host Washington.

Blue Jays 3, Orioles 2: Richard Urena singled home the winning run in the ninth inning and host Toronto handed slumping Baltimore its sixth straight loss.

Rays 2, Yankees 1: Adeiny Hechavarria hit a tiebreaking home run in the eighth inning off Sonny Gray and Tampa Bay, playing as the home team in a series relocated to Citi Field because of Hurricane Irma, beat the Yankees.

Royals 4, White Sox 3: Brandon Moss hit a grand slam in the first inning for his third consecutive game with a homer, powering host Kansas City past Chicago.

Astros 1, Angels 0: Justin Verlander pitched eight innings of one-hit ball in a stellar second start for visiting Houston, and the Astros snapped their four-game skid.

Phillies 9, Marlins 8 (15):

Nick Williams hit a walk-off, two-out double in the bottom of the 15th inning, scoring Aaron Altherr as host Philadelphia rallied for the win.

Mariners 10, Rangers 3: Ben Gamel and Kyle Seager both hit three-run homers to lead Seattle past host Texas in a matchup of wild card hopefuls.

Cardinals 13, Reds 4: Paul DeJong homered, Yadier Molina drove in three runs and streaking host St. Louis outslugged Cincinnati.

Cubs 8, Mets 3: Kris Bryant hit a three-run homer, Jose Quintana pitched seven effective innings and host Chicago got a sorely needed victory.

Rockies 4, Diamondbacks 2: Carlos Gonzalez, heating up for the stretch run after a subpar season at the plate, homered twice and visiting Colorado won its sixth in a row.

Pac-12 working on shortening games

Associated Press

EUGENE, Ore. — The Pac-12's test program to shorten games appears to be doing just that.

All non-conference games airing on the Pac-12 Network this season have reduced quarter breaks, while a few have fewer commercial breaks, too. Some games feature 15-minute halftimes.

In the 12 games so far that have been part of the pilot program, game time is down to 3:16, according to the league. Washington's 63-7 win over Montana last weekend lasted just 2:54. Last season, the Pac-12 averaged 3:26 per game.

Pac-12 Commissioner Larry Scott said that on the league's opening week, the test allowed fans watching at home to see all the game between Southern Utah and Oregon and the first play of Western Michigan at USC in a tight broadcasting window.

"My programming folks explained to us that wouldn't have happened if we hadn't imple-

mented some of the initiatives. We would have missed the first series," Scott said. "There are some things we're doing around the edges that we can control, around halftime, around commercial breaks, and speeding things up, both in terms of the mechanics and our policies."

The Pac-12 is not alone. The SEC introduced a few similar new policies this season. The National Football Foundation highlighted game length as a "point of emphasis" this season, pointing out that average length at the FBS level rose from 3:08 in 2008 to 3:24 last season.

It is worth noting that the trend toward speedier offenses — which results in additional plays and touchdowns — has helped lengthen games. But a sneaky source of those added minutes is halftimes, where the 20-minute limit is sometimes stretched by things like on-field coach interviews. A new rule change allowed for coaches to shorten — but not lengthen — halftime by mutual agreement.

Television is a driving force.

Scott noted that Week One included four back-to-back-to-back games on the Pac-12 Network.

"It's one of the reasons we like the idea of initiatives that speed up the game," Scott said.

In addition to making sure games fit into TV windows, the format is also designed to give viewers in the stadium a better experience, reducing those pesky "TV timeouts" for commercials — which will no doubt please Pacific Northwest fans sitting in the pouring rain this fall for the Pac-12 After Dark games.

Oregon State coach Gary Andersen likes the idea.

"Ultimately for me I'd like to see a football game be at three hours," Andersen said. "I think that's plenty long for the kids that are involved."

New Cal coach Justin Wilcox also supports the initiative: "I'm for it. I think it's probably better for everybody to be more efficient during the game. ... I know for us the biggest impact will be at halftime. We've just got to be really organized and

efficient in how we operate during that time."

But Washington State coach Mike Leach disagreed.

"I've never had a problem with game length — games vary a little bit as far as how long they are and that's fine with me," he said. "If it were up to me we'd leave the games alone and not mess with them."

As for the details, the test is being implemented for 15 non-conference games involving league teams this season broadcast on the Pac-12 Network. The Pac-12's test shortens halftimes from 20 to 15 minutes for seven games. All games have quicker breaks at the quarters, and three games have fewer commercial breaks. Eight games will adhere to a ":01 kickoff time" which seeks to keep opening kickoffs closer to the scheduled broadcast start.

The conference will collect feedback from fans and consult with its coaches, administrators and broadcast partners to evaluate the pilot program after the 2017 season.

Playmakers are still TBD, but Alabama keeps rolling

Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. — Alabama tight end Hale Hentges is OK with not getting the ball that often, figuring that means other playmakers are getting their chance.

That hasn't always been the case in the first two games for the top-ranked Crimson Tide, who are still trying to identify, develop or just get the ball more to some of those weapons. Quarterback Jalen Hurts and Alabama should have plenty of options and some time to figure things out before the next big game.

Against Florida State, established go-to guy Calvin Ridley was the only wide receiver to catch a ball. The Tide tried to mix it up early in a blowout of Fresno State, targeting seven different players with passes

on the first three series.

Hentges, whose only catch went for a 23-yard touchdown, has a different perspective on the matter.

"When you have such a great offense like this with so many weapons, so many pieces, if you don't get the ball, that's a great thing," he said after the 41-10 victory over the Bulldogs. "A lot of times that means the other people are getting the ball."

Not always, though. Against Fresno State, Hurts made many of the plays himself, running for 154 yards and two touchdowns with an efficient 128-yard passing performance.

He and backup Tua Tagovailoa did make more of an effort to throw to receivers other than Ridley, who still had team highs of five catches and 45 yards

Colorado State visits Satur-

day night, and Alabama doesn't face another ranked team until No. 23 Tennessee comes to Bryant-Denny Stadium on Oct. 21.

Hurts hasn't had a big passing performance yet, but he's split his production evenly between rushing and throwing.

He has run for 209 yards and two touchdowns, including a 55-yarder. Hurts' passing numbers: 224 yards with two touchdowns and a long of 53 yards.

More importantly, Hurts and Alabama have yet to turn the ball over.

Saban thinks any outside criticism of Hurts' early season performance is overblown.

"I think different players play winning football in different ways," he said on Monday. "If you want to be critical of a guy for rushing for 154 yards and think he should not do that so he can pass more, then that's

up to you. You can do that if you want. But we did pass for 192 yards and I think that's the kind of balance that we want to create."

The receiving corps doesn't have a lot of experience beyond Ridley, though Cam Sims and Robert Foster are both seniors.

Freshman receivers Henry Ruggs III and Jerry Jeudy each had their first college catch against Fresno State. Fellow freshman DeVonta Smith has played in both games but doesn't have a reception.

Damien Harris and fellow tailback Bo Scarbrough are established performers who haven't had breakout games yet, or needed them. Hurts has nearly doubled Harris' 105 rushing yards while Scarbrough has 76.

There's never been a question about Hurts' running ability.

NASCAR's Patrick won't return to SHR

Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — Tony Stewart called Danica Patrick “fearless” on Wednesday, his first comments about her upcoming departure from his race team in a financial move that could end her full-time driving career in NASCAR.

Patrick will not return to Stewart-Haas Racing next season. Unless she can secure significant sponsorship, she likely won't be able to find another full-time ride.

Patrick is the only woman racing at NASCAR's top level and she's also the most accomplished.

“I've always been a believer in Danica's ability as a racecar driver and that continues to be the case. She's one of the most fearless people I've ever met. She has never backed down from a challenge,” Stewart wrote on his Facebook page. “In fact, she's sought out new challenges throughout her career, and that's what brought

her to NASCAR and Stewart-Haas Racing.”

Patrick has driven for Stewart-Haas Racing her entire Cup career. She has seven top-10 finishes in 180 career starts and is currently 28th in the standings, the lowest in her Cup career. She won the pole for the 2013 Daytona 500, won an IndyCar race in 2008, is the highest finishing female driver in Indianapolis 500 history with a third-place run in 2009 and is the only woman to lead laps in both the Indy 500 and the Daytona 500. Patrick is the only woman to win a Cup pole and those top-10 finishes are the most of any female Cup driver.

“Making the jump from IndyCar to NASCAR is not easy, yet she had the courage to do so and put up better numbers than a lot of other drivers who have tried to make that same transition,” Stewart wrote. “My support for Danica is unwavering. We're going to end this season strong and make the most of

these last 10 races.”

Patrick's sponsorship package fell apart at the start of this season when Nature's Bakery backed out of a three-year deal after just one season. Patrick's contract with SHR ran through 2018, but the team has been searching for sponsorship since the Nature's Bakery fiasco.

Smithfield Foods on Tuesday said it was moving its sponsorship from Richard Petty Motorsports to Stewart-Haas next season, and the financial decision set in motion Patrick's departure. Richard Petty and the Smithfield CEO traded insults over lack of performance at RPM being the reason Smithfield is leaving.

Kevin Harvick noted Wednesday that Patrick's performance likely played into her current predicament. The two are teammates at SHR and Harvick has tried to help Patrick over the years. Like Stewart, he pointed to the difficult transition Patrick had to make from Indy cars

to stock cars.

“Danica has been a huge part of this sport and turned a lot of people into racing that might not have ever turned into racing,” Harvick said. “I hope that Danica gets a sponsor because she's important to our sport.”

SHR and Smithfield have not said which driver the company will sponsor next year. The team does not have a deal yet with current Daytona 500 winner Kurt Busch, and Busch, Patrick and Clint Bowyer have all had sponsorship difficulties this season. Smithfield could end up on the car Patrick has driven with another driver, or the team could downsize.

Matt Kenseth, meanwhile, said he's not a candidate to replace Patrick and he believes SHR already has a driver in line for the No. 10 Ford.

Patrick has launched a clothing line, has a book coming out next year and has made a transition into promoting a healthy and fit lifestyle.

Seahawks' sluggish start raises issues with offense

Associated Press

RENTON, Wash. — It took just a few minutes of the season opener against Green Bay for preseason fears about the Seattle Seahawks' offensive line and its ability to protect quarterback Russell Wilson to re-emerge as legitimate concerns.

There wasn't much that Seattle's offensive line dealt with well in the 17-9 loss to the Packers. It continued a trend of lackluster season-opening performances in recent seasons, although not all of them have been losses. Seattle is 3-3 in its past six season openers and has scored 16 points or less in four of those.

But Sunday's loss to the Packers revived all the concerns about the offensive line that Seattle had tried to downplay. Tackles Rees Odhiambo and Germain Ifedi struggled to keep pressure off Wilson from the edges, while Green Bay's

Mike Daniels was a problem for the interior of the line.

Wilson was sacked three times, hit seven times and only when Seattle went with its hurry-up offense did the Seahawks find a rhythm. Seattle finished with 225 total yards and was 3-for-12 on third downs.

“Right out of the chutes we missed a couple of opportunities to do things and made a couple of mistakes, errors that we had,” Seattle coach Pete Carroll said Monday. “And then also I would give it to Daniels, he played a heck of a football game and gave us some problems. We didn't deal with him as well as we thought we would.”

Carroll was far from panicking. But he clearly wasn't pleased with the performance.

“I'm disappointed that we are talking about that today,” Carroll said. “I thought that we were moving in the right direc-

tion. I've seen us move in the right direction, but in this game we weren't as sharp.”

The offensive line wasn't the only unit struggling on that side of the ball.

Wilson missed a few open throws and tight end Jimmy Graham had an underwhelming performance. Graham was targeted seven times but made just three catches for 8 yards and had a critical third-down drop early in the fourth quarter.

“It wasn't his best game. He'll do better. He was really disappointed on the ball that got away from him on the sideline,” Carroll said.

While Carroll spent part of Monday trying to figure out ways to help the underperforming offense, he was also having conversations with the league about what led to the ejection of Jeremy Lane in the first quarter after he was deemed to have thrown a punch. No tele-

vision replays showed a punch being thrown but rather Lane putting his arm on Davante Adams' facemask after the pair tussled.

Carroll said he agreed with the analysis from the TV broadcast that the punishment was harsh.

The opener also proved that Seattle's defense should be every bit as good as expected.

The Packers were held scoreless in the first half and one of the two touchdowns the Seahawks allowed came after Wilson fumbled at his own 6-yard line.

Green Bay quarterback Aaron Rodgers threw for 311 yards, but Seattle was able to sack him four times.

“To hold that group down and not really let them take the ball down the field and score ... they did a good job running, and hitting and covered well,” Carroll said.